

Strengthening Families Programs

Tip Sheet #9: Sustaining Funding

Guidance for Site Coordinators and Group Leaders

Where to Get Funds to Implement SFP: Often the Strengthening Families Program is originally implemented by local agencies with funds from external funding sources. For instance, CSAP funded 144 communities in the United States, up to \$100,000 for two years to implement a science-based family program for their Parenting and Family Strengthening Initiative. The program implementation costs about \$720 per family or about \$7,200 per group of ten families. See sample budget on web site, www.strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org. If the agency has major transportation costs in high crime areas, or operate in cities with high cost of living and salaries for staff, the costs can range up to \$22,000 per group. Hence, funding is an issue in sustaining SFP after federal or foundation research grants.

1. Seek Other Federal Grants. The SFP can be used and studied in a number of federal grants. NIDA has a Community Multi-site Prevention Research grant that Dr. Kumpfer is applying for and hopes to fund 40 community sites per year for five years. CMHS and CSAT also have grant announcements that can be used to test SFP implementation variables with different populations as does CDC for Community-based Participatory Prevention Research. NIAAA funding can be sought for prevention of alcohol abuse or NIMH grant funds for use of SFP to prevent severe mental disorders in children or parents. If agencies seek federal funds, this must be coordinated with Dr. Kumpfer.

2. Seek Local or National Foundation Funding. After federal research grants have ended, some sites have been successful in writing small grants to local foundations to continue the funding.

3. Seek County Substance Abuse Prevention Funds (County Funds or Block Grant Pass-through Funds). Many sites where SFP has been implemented, such as the original drug treatment agency and mental health center, are still operating today after 20 years. In fact, they have expanded to provide family prevention services to up to 60 housing communities and schools in their city through county substance abuse funding. Once a funded agency for substance abuse prevention services and with good program evaluation outcomes, they become part of the historical funding base for the county and can fund several staff, half to full time to implement SFP in the community.

4. Seek State Substance Abuse Funding Directly. Some states, such as Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, New Jersey, Florida, and others have developed state Strengthening Families Program Initiatives or cross-site studies. Some of these state initiatives have their own cross-site evaluators. New Jersey has developed three different funding mechanisms that include a novel "Purchase of Services" fiscal arrangement. This funding mechanism allows any agency in the state to come to a statewide training of group leaders in SFP for free. Then their certified group leaders are free to implement SFP in their area. When they have graduated eight families,

they can bill on a purchase order for a set cost of \$12,500 when the outcome pre and posttests, and attendance sheets are submitted. The state project officers, Dr. Kumpfer or associates conduct site visit fidelity checks.

5. Seek Lapsing Public Funding. Another creative idea is to call your state or county office about four months prior to the end of their fiscal year, generally June 30th, to ask if they would fund a one time, one year services grant with lapsing funds. Generally, they will say to submit a short request with a budget and if in the month prior to the end of their budget cycle they discover that some of their contractors have not spent or obligated all their state funds, they will quickly issue you a small grant to avoid lapsing the funds to the general treasury. This also applies to federal agencies as well, whose directors will entertain proposals for one-time expenditures to use up their lapsing funds as well. The amount of such requests should not be more than about \$50,000.

6. Seek State Child Abuse and Neglect or Violence Prevention Funding. Some SFP sites are now being funded through their state offices that deal with child protective services or family services. They have convinced their state that foster care funding is more costly than helping families in jeopardy of having a child placed in protective service to become better parents. In some cases, the families are referred by Family Drug Courts or protective services to SFP to help them to reunite with their families

7. Family Drug Courts, Family Courts, or Drug Courts. Contact your local court judge or drug court staff to do a presentation on SFP or bring them literature on SFP. The goal is to get the court to refer clients and in some cases to pay for their treatment in SFP. Since, family skills training programs, such as SFP and Focus on the Family (Catalano, et. al., 2000) have been shown to reduce recidivism in drug treatment and reduce drug use, some judges are interested in funding SFP in their area. Judge McGee from Reno, Nevada is the President of the National Association of Family and Drug Court Professionals. Dr. Kumpfer gave a presentation to the national conference this year and many drug court professionals and judges expressed interest in having SFP in their area. Often the courts do not want to staff SFP directly, but want a local agency they trust to be the implementers. However, they will help fund the program for their referred families.

8. Bill Medicaid for SFP Groups. Some mental health or drug treatment centers appear to be able to bill Medicaid for family strengthening groups for any of their clients who are Medicaid eligible.

9. Charge Treatment Clients Insurance. Some clinical sites are able to bill the client's insurance for short-term treatment including the SFP family groups.

10. Other Funding, Foundations, Corporation, United Way, etc. Many other funding mechanisms have been used. United Way funds many SFP sites in the nation through their relationships with prevention and family services agencies.

11. Faith Community Funding. Some faith-based communities are funding SFP in their congregations with the base budget of the church. Costs are generally lower when assistant pastors or ministers and volunteers are assigned to run the program. Space is generally available as well as child-care volunteers. Hence, the only expenses are for the weekly incentives for homework completion and for the graduation parties and program materials and training workshops. Meals can be donated and “community angels” recruited from the congregation to buy, prepare, and serve the meals.

Where to Get Funds for SFP Incentives

For those sites participating in the grant, all incentives are paid for by the research grant. However, if after the grant has ended a site wants to continue implementing the program, they can sometimes use their own staff as implementers, but need funds for the extra meals, and incentives. When there is little or no budget for incentives, site coordinators have been creative in collecting donations of goods or funds. Sometimes a local charity (e.g., church, corporation, or foundation) has sponsored the agency by giving funds that can be used to purchase these incentives. Former participants in the program have also conducted fund raising drives with staff support by setting up a booth at a fair, doing a bake sale, washing cars, etc.

Ideas for where to get goods or monetary donations include:

- **Agency Personnel Department** staff sometimes have donated or cut rate coupons or tickets for sporting or cultural events that are donated for staff. If staff are willing to donate them to the program, they can be used as incentives for clients. This is one way the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Council of Governments is getting basketball and movie tickets for participants.
- **Men’s and Women’s Service Organizations.** There are a number of local fraternal service organizations, such as the Rotary, Lions, Elks, Masons, Optimists, etc. who are interested in helping with strengthening families. In addition, many of these have women’s chapters that can help. In addition, there are women’s service organizations such as the Junior League, who can also help.
- **Fraternities and Sororities.** National fraternities and sororities with local chapters and alumni chapters can be asked if they will help with raising funds or getting donations. Black sororities have been helpful.
- **Fire and Police Department.** These service organizations are often looking for local charities or groups to sponsor. They often do a sub for Santa project and want families in need for which to provide Christmas gifts. Some sites have had them come for the graduation, just before Christmas, complete with a Santa giving out Christmas baskets of goodies for each family.
- **Local Corporations and Foundations.** Call their charitable giving officer and ask whether they can help with donations for incentives. Requests are not large and these corporations or

foundations can make a major contribution.

Credit and Cultivate Donors. Be sure to invite donors to the graduation and give them credit for their donations. Mention their sponsorship in all program publicity. This lends additional credibility to the new Strengthening Families Program and will increase future donations, referrals and enrollment.